

**Senate of the Yale Faculty
of Arts and Sciences and School of Engineering and Applied Science**

Resolution on Principles for Addressing Grade Inflation/Compression

Approved by the FAS-SEAS Senate on September 24th, 2026

WHEREAS, education is central to the mission of Yale, and grading is one instrument for evaluating the outcomes of that education;

WHEREAS, grades ideally provide information for students, instructors, and external entities including graduate and professional schools and employers;

WHEREAS, grade inflation has substantially reduced the information content of grades at Yale, as evidenced by the fact that 80.75 percent of grades in Yale College were an A or A- in 2024-2025;

WHEREAS, the 2026 Report on Trust in Higher Education recommended that Yale create a college-wide GPA standard and provide percentile ranking of students as a measure of academic standing, to be used for Latin honors, fellowships, and other distinctions tied to academic performance;

WHEREAS, Yale College's Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Advising has been charged with advising the Yale College Dean on the issue of grade inflation/compression; and

WHEREAS, the design and implementation of any policy addressing grade inflation will have consequences for students, faculty, and the academic mission;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the FAS-SEAS Senate urges the Committee on Teaching, Learning and Advising and Yale College to incorporate the following principles in the design, evaluation, and implementation of any policy addressing grade inflation/compression:

1. Prioritize learning and intellectual growth. The liberal arts tradition of Yale College places learning and intellectual growth at its center. Grading at Yale should not undermine this principle and provide incentives for students and encourage them to take challenging courses, to cultivate the more specialized skills, to take intellectual risks outside their areas of strength, to develop their creative capacities to the fullest while at Yale, and to foster a collaborative learning environment while motivating healthy competition to drive students' performance and growth. Any new policy should take into account evidence-based studies of the effects of changes in grading policy on student learning.

2. Recognize achievement and mastery through meaningful grades. Grades should provide a meaningful measure of a student's mastery of course material, calibrated to the difficulty of that material and the rigor of the instructor's expectations. Transcripts should communicate student achievement clearly to students, prospective employers, and graduate admissions committees.

3. Restore the information content of grades through transparency. Yale should prioritize informational rather than mandatory approaches to restoring the meaning of grades. These include reporting course- and department-level grade distributions and decoupling Latin honors and internal awards from raw GPA thresholds. Such measures should help students and others interpret achievement in context and support informed faculty discussion of grading standards.

4. Preserve the classroom autonomy of the faculty within a collective framework. Faculty must retain final authority over grading policy in their courses. At the same time, a common framework approved by the faculty should be implemented consistently across all departments and divisions. Within that framework, departments, programs, and their faculty should establish transparent and intentional communication to clarify collective academic standards and determine grade distributions within courses, and where appropriate, across programs and majors. Consistent implementation should preserve academically justified differences among disciplines, course levels, and teaching methods, while applying shared expectations across Yale College.

5. Minimize harm to students. Grades are a significant source of student stress with consequences for student wellbeing including increasing competition and reducing collaborative learning, diminishing student investment in exploration, and has been found to be particularly harmful for students who were racially or socioeconomically marginalized. Any policy designed to reduce grade inflation should be implemented only alongside measures that limit its impact on student health and welfare, especially during the transition period.

6. Prevent harm to vulnerable faculty and strengthen teaching evaluation. There is abundant evidence that student evaluations are influenced by grading practices. Faculty, especially untenured ladder faculty, lecturers, lectors, others on term contracts, and those teaching large and required courses, should be protected from consequences arising from grade related student evaluations. Before a new grading policy is implemented, Yale should take measures to address these effects, including developing a peer evaluation program to complement student evaluations in reappointment and promotion, reviewing the evaluation instrument itself for items sensitive to grading severity and the timing of the evaluations as well as ensuring that reappointment and promotion committees are informed of the relationship between grading practices and evaluation scores. A peer evaluation system should be considered for reappointment, promotion, and mentoring new faculty.

7. Consult meaningfully throughout policy development. Yale College students and faculty should participate in substantive consultation from the outset of policy development, including before a proposal has been drafted and before any policy is adopted. This consultation should address educational goals, implementation, disciplinary differences, and the safeguards needed to protect students and faculty.